

Categorical Exclusion Determination

Bonneville Power Administration
Department of Energy



Proposed Action: McCullough Tap to Cowlitz-LaGrande Wood Pole Relocations

Project No.: 3037

Project Manager: Cynthia Rounds

Location: Pierce County, Washington

| Transmission Line/ROW | Structure # | Township | Range | Section | Ownership/Land Use |
|-----------------------|------------------------|----------|-------|---------|---------------------------|
| McCullough Tap | 1/9, 1/10, 1/7, 1/8 | 19N | 3E | 22 | Private/Rural Residential |

Categorical Exclusion Applied (from Subpart D, 10 C.F.R. Part 1021): B4.13 Upgrading and rebuilding existing powerlines.

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to relocate four wood-pole transmission line structures to allow Pierce County Public Works to expand a road intersection at 22nd Avenue East and 152nd Street East in Pierce County, Washington. BPA will remove structures 1/9, 1/10, 1/7, 1/8 of the McCullough Tap Cowlitz – Canyon No. 1, 2 lines and replace them with new wood poles about 20 feet to the south.

Pierce County is working with landowners to purchase the property and BPA will obtain right-of-way easement from the County for that section of transmission line right-of-way. Project work will include minor vegetation removal, landing construction around proposed structure locations, crane operations, and auguring to allow placement of new poles. General equipment used will include excavators, cranes, and dump trucks. BPA's work will be in accordance with the National Electrical Safety Code and BPA standards.

Pierce County is widening the intersection to help reduce traffic congestion and is conducting environmental review of its road project under the Washington State Environmental Policy Act.

Findings: In accordance with Section 1021.410(b) of the Department of Energy's (DOE) National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Regulations (57 FR 15144, Apr. 24, 1992, as amended at 61 FR 36221-36243, July 9, 1996; 61 FR 64608, Dec. 6, 1996, 76 FR 63764, Nov. 14, 2011), BPA has determined that the proposed action:

- (1) fits within a class of actions listed in Appendix B of 10 CFR 1021, Subpart D see attached Environmental Checklist);
- (2) does not present any extraordinary circumstances that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal; and

(3) has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion.

Based on these determinations, BPA finds that the proposed action is categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

/s/ Chad Browning

Chad Browning

Physical Scientist (Environmental)

Concur:

/s/ Stacy L. Mason

Stacy L. Mason

NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: December 11, 2017

Attachment: Environmental Checklist

Categorical Exclusion Environmental Checklist

This checklist documents environmental considerations for the proposed project and explains why the project would not have the potential to cause significant impacts on environmentally sensitive resources and would meet other integral elements of the applied categorical exclusion.

Proposed Action: McCullough Tap to Cowlitz-LaGrande 2018 Wood Pole Relocations

Project Site Description

Existing structures are located on grass and shrub right-of-way on privately-owned rural residential properties adjacent to 152nd St. E. New pole locations will be set approximately 20 feet to the south of the current locations in a lightly forested area of privately-owned rural residential properties.

Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Environmental Resources

| Environmental Resource Impacts | No Potential for Significance | No Potential for Significance, with Conditions |
|---|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Historic and Cultural Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| <p><u>Explanation:</u> The project area was surveyed December 12, 2014 by a BPA archaeologist and reviewed by Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP). No cultural resources were identified during the survey. DAHP concurred with BPA's no adverse effect to historic properties determination on April 23, 2015.</p> <p>In the event any archaeological material is encountered during project activities, stop work in the vicinity and immediately notify the BPA environmental lead, archaeologist, and project manager; interested tribes; DAHP; and the appropriate local, state and Federal agencies. Implement reasonable measures to protect the discovery site, including any appropriate stabilization or covering. Take reasonable steps to ensure the confidentiality of the discovery site, including restricting access.</p> | | |
| 2. Geology and Soils | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <p><u>Explanation:</u> About 2 acres of land will be disturbed during construction. BMPs will be used to prevent erosion and disturbed areas will be reseeded. No prime or unique farmlands will be affected.</p> | | |
| 3. Plants (including federal/state special-status species) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <p><u>Explanation:</u> Grasses and shrubs will be removed. No federal or state special-status plant species are recorded in the project area. Disturbed areas will be reseeded.</p> | | |
| 4. Wildlife (including federal/state special-status species and habitats) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <p><u>Explanation:</u> The area provides minimal wildlife habitat. No federal or state special-status wildlife species or habitats are recorded in the project area.</p> | | |

5. **Water Bodies, Floodplains, and Fish**
(including federal/state special-status species and ESUs)

Explanation: No in-water work is proposed for this project; and there are no waters containing populations of bull trout or anadromous fish, or their critical habitat within ½ mile of the project area. Additionally, construction Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be implemented throughout the project to ensure localized soil disturbance does not cause sedimentation issues into any waterway.

6. **Wetlands**

Explanation: The project area was surveyed June 5, 2008 by Pierce County and no wetlands were identified within 315 feet of the project footprint.

7. **Groundwater and Aquifers**

Explanation: The proposed work is not anticipated to impact groundwater.

8. **Land Use and Specially Designated Areas**

Explanation: No change in land use and no specially designated areas identified.

9. **Visual Quality**

Explanation: The relocated line and access road to the structures will replace a lightly wooded area; however the structures will look similar to existing structures and will be visually congruent with the existing facilities.

10. **Air Quality**

Explanation: Any fugitive dust or similar air quality impacts during project implementation are expected to be temporary and minimal.

11. **Noise**

Explanation: Construction noise from typical utility line equipment will be temporary and localized.

12. **Human Health and Safety**

Explanation: Project activities will not impact human health or safety. In fact, the proposed action would help reduce outage times and maintain reliable power in the region.

Evaluation of Other Integral Elements

The proposed project would also meet conditions that are integral elements of the categorical exclusion. The project would not:

- Threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety, and health, or similar requirements of DOE or Executive Orders.

Explanation, if necessary:

- Require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities (including incinerators) that are not otherwise categorically excluded.

Explanation, if necessary:

- Disturb hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, or CERCLA excluded petroleum and natural gas products that preexist in the environment such that there would be uncontrolled or unpermitted releases.

Explanation, if necessary:

- Involve genetically engineered organisms, synthetic biology, governmentally designated noxious weeds, or invasive species, unless the proposed activity would be contained or confined in a manner designed and operated to prevent unauthorized release into the environment and conducted in accordance with applicable requirements, such as those of the Department of Agriculture, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the National Institutes of Health.

Explanation, if necessary:

Landowner Notification, Involvement, or Coordination

Description: Notification letters will be sent by the BPA Realty Specialist to all landowners prior to work. In addition, Pierce County is working with affected landowners for the road-widening project.

Based on the foregoing, this proposed project does not have the potential to cause significant impacts on any environmentally sensitive resources.

Signed: /s/ Chad Browning

Chad Browning
Physical Scientist (Environmental)

Date: December 11, 2017